

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 222104
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DRAFTED BY OSD/ISA:JMILLER
APPROVED BY EUR/RPM:EREHFELD
OSD(MRA AND L):MR. HARRINGTON
OSD:LTCOL. KEECH
OSD/ISA:COL. PFEIFFER
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USAREUR
USDEL MC BRUSSELS
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, MARR

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM (ETS) (INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS)

1. THE FOLLOWING MEMORANDUM HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY ASD/ISA; SAME SUBJECT AS ABOVE:

QUOTE.

CONGRESS HAS ASKED THAT WE LOOK AT THE POSSIBILITY OF UTILIZING INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE ETS. ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS THAT THESE FUNDS
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PAGE 02 STATE 222104

COULD NOT BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE, I WISH TO ASK YOUR ASSISTANCE IN CLARIFYING THIS ISSUE. SINCE SECRETARY BROWN HAS ASKED FOR A MID-SEPTEMBER RECOMMENDATION FROM THE ARMY AND WE HAVE TO BRIEF THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES BY SEPTEMBER 13, 1978, SOMETHING PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 8 WOULD BE APPRECIATED. SIGNED WALTER B. LABERGE, UNDER SECRETARY OF THE

ARMY. UNQUOTE.

2. THE RELEVANT TEXT OF THE LATEST HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE REPORT IS AS FOLLOWS:

THE EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM (ETS)

THE ARMY'S OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET REQUEST INCLUDES 8,366,000 DOLLARS TO REPLACE AND REHABILITATE PORTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM. PRINCIPAL EFFORTS ENTAIL THE REPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION OF ENTRANCE CABLE AND CABLE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS. THE EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM (ETS) IS THE NAME GIVEN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S TELEPHONE SYSTEM IN USE IN CENTRAL EUROPE, PRINCIPALLY WEST GERMANY. THIS SYSTEM HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE SINCE SHORTLY AFTER THE END OF WORLD WAR II AND RELIES UPON U.S.-OWNED EQUIPMENT AND LINES AS WELL AS LINES RENTED FROM THE GERMAN BUNDESPOST. THE REHABILITATION OF THE EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM IS A MULTI-YEAR PROGRAM WHICH IS CURRENTLY PROGRAMMED TO COST IN EXCESS OF 17.5 MILLION DOLLARS.

THE COMMITTEE HAS NOT DIRECTED A SPECIFIC REDUCTION AGAINST THIS YEAR'S REQUEST, BUT INTENDS TO THOROUGHLY REVIEW THE MATTER IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FY 1980
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 222104

BUDGET. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE RESTORATION (REPLACEMENT) OF THIS TELEPHONE SYSTEM SHOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING IS A NATO TERM FOR FINANCING FACILITIES NECESSARY FOR THE DEPLOYMENT AND OPERATION OF NATO MILITARY FORCES, INCLUDING US FORCES COMMITTED TO NATO. THE COMMON INSTALLATIONS PROVIDED ON THE TERRITORY OF ONE NATION (REFERRED TO AS THE HOST COUNTRY) CAN BE USED BY THE FORCES OF EACH NATO MEMBER AND THE FACILITY BENEFITS ALL NATO PARTICIPANTS. ALSO, THIS PROJECT APPEARS TO BE AN INVESTMENT TYPE EXPENSE AND SHOULD PROBABLY BE FINANCED WITH MILITARY CONSTRUCTION FUNDS. THE EQUIPMENT, CABLES, ETC., ARE NOT SEVERABLE FROM THE FACILITIES IN WHICH THEY ARE INSTALLED.

THE COMMITTEE HAS MADE A GENERAL REDUCTION OF 4,000,000 DOLLARS AGAINST VARIOUS COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS FINANCED IN THE O AND M APPROPRIATION. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT THE ARMY ALLOCATE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THIS REDUCTION TO THE EUROPEAN TELEPHONE SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROGRAM AND THAT THE ARMY PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY PENDING

FURTHER REVIEW AND JUSTIFICATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

3. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ETS DOES NOT

QUALIFY FOR NATO FUNDING UNDER CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE
CRITERIA; IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT CRITERIA WERE REVISED
TO PERMIT COMMON FUNDING, THE US COULD END UP LOSING
FINANCIALLY, SINCE MANY NON-US SYSTEMS WOULD BE
ELIGIBLE FOR COMMON FUNDING.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
IN ORDER TO REPLY TO THIS REQUEST. THIS IS NEEDED
NLT WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1978.

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PAGE 04 STATE 222104

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